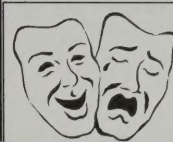


DOUBTLESS BAY CABLE TV SUBSCRIBER NEWSLETTER



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Welcome!

As our subscription base grows and service is now being connected for the first time in Chucks Cove and Cable Bay, we introduce what will be an informal "news letter" for cable subscribers. We do not plan to make it monthly at this stage but doubtless it will grow into a monthly feature.

About ESPN-

A number of channel additions and changes have occurred or will take place this month. The most unsettling news is the TEMPORARY discontinuance of the two ESPN sport channels (ESPN as the second sport channel for Sky package subscribers, and as channel 26 for premium subscribers; ESPN-2 for Premium subscribers on channels 25 and 37). As you may have heard, Sky TV Network ownership is changing and media baron Rupert Murdoch is now in the driver's seat at Sky. His policy is to eliminate all competition and the availability of ESPN to us through any outlet other than Sky is a victim of this policy. We are cautiously optimistic that we will be able to regain use rights for ESPN and ESPN-2 but are realistic enough to know this will not happen overnight. That's the bad news.

The better news is as follows:

Quite separate from Sky and ESPN, we have been planning to add two additional sport channels anyhow. The first channel, "P-Sport," will come from a new satellite dish antenna we are installing in mid-October. The only unknown here is whether the new dish (4.6 metres in size - a BIG one!) will be sensitive enough to bring in this channel. It has never been accomplished in New Zealand previously so we are on new ground here. If it works as we hope, "P-Sport" (which is every bit as good as ESPN) will be available by November. The second channel, called "Prime Sports," is to be available to us around January 1st from a new (yet to be launched - which means the launch of the satellite has to work before this will happen) satellite. With good luck, this channel will be available by mid-January. So in the worst case, we'll have additional sport to replace ESPN (and ESPN-2) and in the best case we'll have four sport channels including the two from ESPN.

In October-

To make up for the (temporary) shortage of ESPN and ESPN-2, we are doing the following:

1) **Sky Orange** is now available in place of ESPN for Sky Package subscribers. No TV set adjustment is required - where you previously received ESPN as a part of your Sky package, you now receive Sky Orange. Sky only subscribers have a \$5 per month price increase as a result of this addition (which is our cost from Sky - we make nothing on this one!)

2) For Premium Subscribers, **BBC World** replaces ESPN on channel 26; no TV set adjustment is required, BBC-World should now be where ESPN was previously. Cable channel 25, where ESPN-2 was formerly located, will for now remain empty of programming.

And there are additional new services now on cable quite independent of the ESPN situation. They are:

3) **JET-TV** (Japan Entertainment Television) now appears on Premium Cable channel 23. This is a (virtually) all English service and we enclose a copy of the JET-TV guide for October with this newsletter. The times are for Singapore which means you add 4 hours (i.e. 4PM becomes 8PM for us while we are on standard time; 9PM when we go to daylight time!).

GMA, Philippines, previously on channel 23 is moved to channel 35.

4) **RFO Tahiti**, mostly French but with many French Polynesia programmes, will appear on cable channel 42 sometime between the middle of October and the end of the month. There is considerable sport on this service as well.

5) At about the same time as RFO appears, we will begin an experiment with two (first ever in New Zealand!) direct "network feeds" from American television networks **ABC** (American Broadcasting Company) and **CBS** (Columbia Broadcasting System). Now - nobody in New Zealand has ever previously attempted direct American reception before and we are once again on unproved ground.

There are several unique technical problems with this and we ask you understanding while we solve these one at a time. Here is the sequence:

- 1) ABC (USA) will appear on cable channel 31
- 2) CBS (USA) will appear on cable channel 32

The pictures will NOT be as good as we would like for the first month. Initially, we have to prove we can do this. When we are sure of that, NEXT we have to be convinced there are enough cable subscribers who will watch this programming to make a sizeable new investment on our part practical. When those two things happen, THEN we will take technical steps to improve the quality of the reception. Initially the images will have a slight "jitter" which if we decide to retain these channels can and will be eliminated with some special "anti-jitter" equipment. Your feedback to us will help us decide what to do with these two new channels so let us hear from you!

TV Guides

We announced in September the availability of printed monthly guides for many of our cable channel services. Approximately 25% of subscribers have ordered one or more guides. Frankly, the task of keeping you up to date on cable channel 98 with the latest programming information has become overwhelming. Therefore, effective now we are modifying the channel 98 listing service to ONLY show "specials" and "changes" in printed guide programming. Our three movie channels are now available with month long guides, as is Discovery, JET-TV, Sky (Australia) Horse Racing, and NBC Asia. (ESPN and ESPN-2 were also available and will become so again when/if we regain carriage rights for these channels). And we are working on additional schedules as well.

Australian Service

Our carriage (from March 1996) of EMTV from Papua New Guinea, with many Australian Nine Network programmes, was terminated by our decision during September. The signal from the (Russian) satellite they use has become so poor in quality that we could no longer tolerate the erratic service. EMTV realises they have a "satellite problem" and is taking steps to move their service to a new satellite. Unfortunately they have run into some difficulties doing this and we do not anticipate their going to a new satellite (which will instantly clear up their signal for us) much before the first of the year. As a substitute, we have been carrying the Australian ABC Network on EMTV's dial position - channel 29. The ABC service is excellent ("4 Corners," plenty of Australian sport, excellent documentaries and no advertising!) and we plan to keep it even after EMTV returns. Their programme times given are for South Australia which on standard time is 2-1/2 hours from us (i.e. they say 7PM for a programme; it will be 9.30PM here). We plan a second (and third) Australian channel in the future as well.

SKY London and Sky Horse Racing Reception Problems

SKY London News (cable channel 21) must be very popular! We have more complaints about the "sputtering reception" for this channel than all other channels combined. SKY London is relayed to us through Hong Kong and yes - there is a technical problem. Fortunately there may be a solution to this one which could be in place by late-October. At that time Sky News London is to be available via an Australian relay where the Australians will add some of their own news content. The exact composition of this London+Australia news service is unknown to us at this time so we will plan to carry Sky London as we now do plus Sky News via Australia on two separate channels initially. If after carrying both for a month there seems to be no substantive difference, we'll eliminate one.

In the meantime, Sky News assures us they will take steps to improve our "sputtering reception" here via Hong Kong. And - the same problem and the same fix applies to Sky Horse Racing Australia which is on cable channel 29 and which also has the same "sputtering" problem. They will get it right one of these days!

Did You Know?

Many Wellington suburbs now have cable TV - 23 channels are available. And Telecom is installing cable TV for Howick and other Auckland suburbs with 14 channels available. Both report their most popular channel is TNT Movies.

And-

You can save 15% by paying for your cable TV service one year in advance - like getting 1.5 months free! Or, to eliminate the hassle of remembering to pay your monthly cable TV fee by mail or at Doubtless Bay Pharmacy, we also offer direct bank debit from your account to ours. Questions? Call Gay Cooper on 406-0651.

